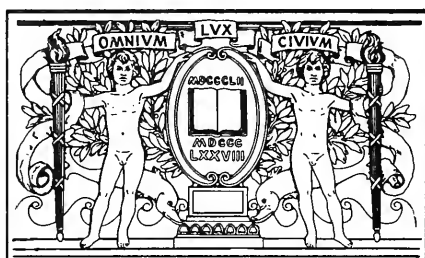


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**HENRY KEMBLE OLIVER.**

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*A. L. Oliver*





Jones, Jesse Henry

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**HENRY KEMBLE OLIVER.**

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FROM THE SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE  
MASSACHUSETTS BUREAU OF STATISTICS OF LABOR :  
1886.

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# HENRY KEMBLE OLIVER.

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BY REV. JESSE H. JONES.

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On Wednesday evening, August 12, 1885, General HENRY K. OLIVER, the first chief of this Bureau, died. His large and manifold powers, the high attainments which he made, and the various important positions in the Commonwealth which he filled; but especially his eminent services as the founder of the work of this Bureau, becoming thereby the pioneer of all such work in the world, render it fitting that a memorial of him should be made by the Bureau in this Report.

## EARLY YEARS.

HENRY KEMBLE OLIVER (originally Thomas Henry, but changed apparently to preserve the name of his mother) was born in North Beverly, Essex County, in this State, on Monday, November 24, 1800. He was the third and youngest son, and eighth child of the nine children, of Rev. Daniel and Elizabeth (Kemble) Oliver. He was in the sixth generation from Thomas Oliver, surgeon, who with his wife Ann and eight children came over from Bristol, England, in the ship *Lion*, along with the family of Governor Winthrop, landing at Boston, June 5, 1632; and who was one of the founders of the First Church of that town and a Ruling Elder in it. His

mother, daughter of Thomas Kemble, Esq., of Boston, was descended from Thomas and Margaret Kemble, who came over to that city in 1640. Both families had remained there from the first. His ancestors in the direct line on his father's side, after Surgeon Oliver, were three merchants (the third a graduate of Harvard, and all three of marked eminence), one lawyer, and one minister, his father. The Olivers were connected by marriage with various leading families of the State, — with the Hutchinsons, Wendells, Brattles, Belchers, and Bradstreets. His father's mother was sister to the grandfather of Oliver Wendell Holmes, and the same blood which ran in his veins, and in the veins of the illustrious physician-poet, ran also in those of Wendell Phillips, *clarum nomen*, whose personal effort, as much at least as that of any, brought this Bureau into existence. Down to a few years ago the family had supplied forty out of the forty-five of the Oliver alumni names at Harvard and Dartmouth. Plainly, then, from the choicest of that choice seed-wheat which God sifted the whole nation of England to get, wherewith to plant a new nation in New England, this man sprang.

The father, Rev. Daniel Oliver, was a minister of rigid orthodoxy, after the strict, Puritan type. He graduated from Dartmouth in 1785, was pastor of the North Church, Boston, from 1787 to 1800, preached in Beverly one year, and in Exeter, N. H., a short time; after which, in 1802, he brought his family back to Boston to remain, while he himself went forth as a missionary to the Indians, going for years on long and wearying horseback rides from place to place in what were then the western wilds, preaching the Gospel to the dusky savages of the forest.

The family being now settled in Boston, Henry Kemble in due time attended the Mayhew school there; and prepared for college partly in the Latin school, partly at Phillips Academy, Andover, and partly with an elder brother in a private school;

and he was by this brother entered at Harvard in 1814, at the age of thirteen years and eight months. Surely the boy gave promise of what the man would be.

After two years his father removed him to Dartmouth, chiefly at least because he looked with strong disfavor upon what he considered the growing theological laxity of Harvard. In 1818 he was graduated by *both* colleges, certainly a singular and very unusual mark of high esteem. Concerning himself at this time, he has left these remarks :

“On leaving college, . . . I had a not very large amount of scholarly knowledge, and that chiefly in Latin and Greek, but I had excellent health, thoroughly pure moral habits and moral principles. I had a natural aversion to intoxicating drinks and tobacco, and all forms of dissipation, and a moral dread of bad or dangerous company and excesses. While in college an evening passed in the practice of music or in visiting families where music, especially sacred music, was practised, was the greatest pleasure I desired.”

For a number of months he found only occasional and trifling employments, but in the early summer of the following year he had gained the fit place in which to begin his career. In May he applied for the position of usher in the newly established Latin grammar school at Salem, and received the appointment.

#### TEACHER AT SALEM.

On Saturday, June 12, 1819, he, “a beardless youth” of eighteen years and seven months, took the stage for that city, and arriving there “was welcomed as a member of the household of the late Rev. Dr. Browne Emerson, pastor of the South Church.” By a son of his host, then a lad, and to be one of his pupils, he is spoken of at this time as “a fine, good-looking, even handsome young man, fresh from Dartmouth College, and full of all sorts of college pranks and college learning.”

The schoolroom, in which he was to teach, "had seats for eighty boys, and was crowded with a hundred and twenty boys, —an unmanageable mass, but that a third teacher, Master Parker, . . . took the younger classes into the committee room for recitation." Of the spirit in which he began his work he himself thus writes :

"I entered upon my work as teacher on the following Monday, June 14th, 1819, with very great 'fear and trembling,' and entire distrust in my own abilities, knowledge and ultimate success. This self-distrust has always characterized me and has impeded my labors ; but I determined to work hard in school and out, and if that would secure success, no effort on my part should be wanting."

From the first he felt poorly furnished for his work. His early studies "were not congenial, consisting mostly, after he was nine, of mere translations from Latin and Greek into English, with very insufficient instruction in any English studies." As expressing his own judgment in his riper years he says :

"My intellectual powers had not been properly and philosophically cultivated. . . . On the whole, the nine years spent in preparing for college and in college I have always considered a failure ; and but for the hard, close, unyielding perseverance of the nine years that followed graduation, I should, as a scholar, have been a greater failure. But finding, when I commenced teaching, my imperfections, I set about a course of self-education, first in the studies in which I was guiding others, then in French, then in Spanish and Italian, adding afterwards a wide course of mathematics and philosophy, general literature and history, with astronomy."

It is of special interest as showing the power of his mind to grow, and grasp, and enlarge its aptitudes, to know that whereas in youth he had no relish for mathematics, he came

at length, as the result of his determined studying, to have in them a positive delight.

This course he pursued alone, this "battle he fought out unaided," except as he "consulted that well-known and accurate Greek scholar, the late Hon. John Pickering."

"Feeling," he continues, "the great deficiencies of my previous education, and the constant push of the demands made upon me by the pupils, I was merciless to myself, studying as many hours out of school as I taught within. What I thus acquired I have never forgotten." And he still further says, "My unvarying rule in the classics was to keep myself as thoroughly prepared on every author in the hands of every class in school, as existing facilities would allow, keeping myself a fortnight in advance of their several lessons; and never entering the schoolroom but with the certainty that no question could be brought to me that I could not at once answer."

It was this hard studentship and the mastery thus acquired, which caused it to be said of him in after years,—

"He was a diligent student, and a fine classical scholar. The classics were his delight, and to the day of his death he had not forgotten the beautiful passages from the Greek and Roman writers which he had early learned; and the sharp, clear sentences which he always wrote showed how the Athenian style had taken fast hold upon his mind. His command of words was something wonderful, and his vocabulary seemed inexhaustible."

He rose constantly in the estimation of men. His salary at first was \$600 a year, a quite munificent sum for those days, rarely, if ever, paralleled for so young a man; and now considered to be more in proportion than the \$1,500 which is now paid for much older men in the same relative position. Yet once and again his salary was increased, October 1, 1822, to \$750, and in June, 1824, to \$900. He was selected as the

orator of the day in Salem for the Fourth of July, 1824, and acquitted himself so creditably that his oration was long remembered and spoken of highly. Besides the eloquence of his style, it is especially mentioned that he “dwelt with much enthusiasm on the cause of the Greeks,” who were then striving for independence; and with burning words “denounced the melancholy exception to the purity of our institutions, *the scourge and curse of negro slavery*,” and also “the persecution of the Indians in Georgia;” and that he paid an earnest tribute to Lafayette, closing with a glowing apostrophe which has been preserved. In 1827, when at length the English High School was established, on the 16th of June he was appointed principal with a third increase of salary, now to \$1,000.

On Monday, July 9, 1830, Master OLIVER resigned his position, and directly after set about building a two-story schoolhouse near his own home on Federal street, for a private academy. In the construction and appointments of this building no pains were spared to introduce every excellency then known. Without, it had an ample playground and gymnastic apparatus. Within, it had a coat-room, wash-room, recitation rooms, and various apparatus. The following account of the school is from a Salem print:

“The course of study laid down was extensive and complete, boys being prepared either for college, or for business life; the latter course including the French and Spanish languages, and a very wide range in mathematics, history, and general literature. For the first time in any Salem school, if not for the first time in any school in this country, music was taught, and a regular course of gymnastic training with suitable apparatus was provided. A very complete set of philosophical, astronomical, and chemical apparatus, costing upwards of \$2,000 was procured, which enabled him to supplement his oral and book instruction by actual illustrations. . . . His school was always full, and, with the aid of able assistant teachers, he was enabled to achieve a satisfactory success.”

After five years he yielded to the urgency of friends and changed his school over into one for girls, and "his rooms were immediately filled." This school he continued to teach for eight years, when a very complimentary event withdrew him altogether from his profession, and changed his whole career. Here then we may pause and briefly survey in retrospect his course of life. It was the year 1844. For twenty-five years he had been a teacher in Salem, and his course had been a steadily growing and unbroken success. It was a very remarkable career. Some clue to the secret of it we may gain from the following statements, chiefly made by former pupils, expressing the estimation in which he was held, and showing the work he had done and his manner of doing it.

Mr. D. H. Emerson, son of Rev. Browne Emerson in whose house he first lived at Salem, wrote to him in a letter of reminiscences in 1878 thus :

"You made the Latin school what it became while you were there, and I ascribe all the glory it acquired to you. You drilled us in the grammar and text-books. You compelled us to know all about them. You ground them into us. You were severe in that, and you succeeded with your pupils. Yet you were never severe in your treatment of those who were placed under your rule. This is my testimony. With greatest respect and affection."

The same gentleman writing of him said :

"When I was but a youth he came to my father's house and all the time he continued there we felt that he was in that home as an elder brother, and as a son. . . . With all his decision of character he was never cruel or unjust. In that empire in which he wielded a sceptre, the Salem Latin School, he ever ruled by love. Himself a splendid scholar, he had patience with our dulness, and seemed to enjoy the pains he took to lead us forward in the paths of learning."

An old pupil writes :

“ We found him strict without petulancy, exemplary in habits, firm and humane in correction, never losing temper. He punished if he found it needed, on his own responsibility, without referring to the senior master ; but often with his expressed approbation, saying, ‘ Mr. OLIVER, punish that boy well,’ the only effect of which was, however, to emphasize the deliberateness of the punishment without increasing the amount. I never saw any sign of resentment on the part of the boys.”

Another writes :

“ *Master* OLIVER was the idol of the boys of '19, '20, '21 ; and, therefore, it is as ‘ Master ’ OLIVER that *we* have ever loved to think and speak of him.”

Yet another writes :

“ No man held his scholars more by his potency of nature, his fine mind, his sympathy with youth, his many-sidedness. It is fifty years since, and yet his character shines in our memory with undiminished brightness.”

Of his private school he himself said :

“ No fact laid down in the sciences as existing in those days, and within the grasp of the general school, failed to be illustrated experimentally.”

Concerning discipline in his girls school, he also said :

“ During eight years of my instructing girls no instance occurred of what may be called punishment. To strike a girl was abhorrent to my nature ; nor did anything occur which needed that, or any other method of severity in discipline. Yet I had an average of fifty pupils.”

Rev. Joseph B. Felt in his history of Salem, also, pronounces this school, "the most complete and successful ever carried on in that city."

As an illustration of the truthfulness of the testimony borne concerning him, that "his teaching developed great interest and great proficiency in the scholars of all the schools in which he taught," we give the following fact. "The senior class in the English High School between 1827 and 1830 computed all the solar eclipses of the 19th century between 1831 and 1900, visible in the United States." Can this be equalled, or anything like it given for that time?

These sayings are great praise, such praise as only the excellent of the earth win; but they are the natural utterance of those who had felt the quickening power of his master soul. We glean from them a few phrases in which certain chief traits of his character appear: "Never severe;" "never losing temper;" "he ever ruled by love;" "*Master* OLIVER was the idol of the boys;" "I never saw a sign of resentment on the part of the boys;" "no man held his scholars more by his potency of nature."

Yes, "*potency of nature*," that is the crowning phrase, which includes all the truth contained in the other sayings. Let us try and unfold a little the reality that is in it, and so gain a larger and fuller knowledge of this nature which was so powerful.

This youth, this man, this teacher, this "*Master*" of youth was a wide, deep, strenuous river of human vitality flowing upon and through those in his charge. He maintained complete government, kept clockwork order and precision, and worked his scholars to the hight of their bent; and yet there was no domineering spirit in the man, nothing of tyranny in his temper, or of harshness in his methods. He ruled, but not by will. He controlled, but not by fear. Rather it was his own strong, abounding life which quickened the very fountains

of the life of his pupils, making them wish to do what he would have them do, and awakening in them the desire to strive and the effort to achieve, beyond what could have arisen in them of themselves. By this power he belonged to that class of teachers, few and rare, who are of the first order, of whom Mrs. Emma Willard of Troy, N. Y., and President Mark Hopkins of Williamstown, Mass., are illustrious examples.

During the period which now came to a close the following events personal to himself had occurred. In 1821 he moved his father's family to Salem, and assumed their support. During 1824 he was studying for the ministry, with a view to entering the Episcopal Church, and a sermon which he composed is extant; but becoming Unitarian in his views he gave the matter up. In 1825 he married Sarah, daughter of Capt. Samuel Cook, a retired sea-captain, by whom he had, in all, seven children, two sons and five daughters. In 1836 he was elected a member of the first Common Council of Salem, and was twice re-elected.

When "Master" OLIVER closed his school, and changed the whole course of his life, he had arrived at the full maturity of his powers; and they were marked by largeness of nature, strength, intellectuality, and gentleness. All the best that was in him had been displayed. Henceforth there was to be rather the varied application of his powers in larger spheres of action than the growth and expansion of those powers. We turn now to consider the new direction of his activity.

#### ADJUTANT-GENERAL.

The very complimentary event by which his professional work as a school teacher was brought to an end, and he was set instead in a large field of public affairs, was his appointment, March 22, 1844, by Governor George N. Briggs, upon

the recommendation of Hon. Leverett Saltonstall, as adjutant-general of the State. This altogether strange event, by which the master of a girls school was put in charge of the military affairs of a great State came about as follows :

In 1821 the young teacher enlisted in the Salem Light Infantry. He had an erect, soldierly figure, and strong, military aptitudes ; and this company was to him like a military school in which he acquired a good degree of military knowledge and training. So marked were his capacities and acquirements, that at different times he was pressed to accept a commission, but steadily declined. When, however, in 1833, he, still a private, was elected lieutenant-colonel of the newly organized Sixth Regiment (the same which made itself so famous in Baltimore in 1861), he accepted, and three years after was made its colonel. As showing how efficient an officer he was, the following incident is related.

“On the occasion of Governor Edward Everett’s visit to Salem, September 22, 1837, the Governor said that he never saw regimental manœuvres performed with equal rapidity outside of the regular army,” as they were then performed by Colonel OLIVER’s regiment.

In 1839 he resigned his colonelcy ; but his fine and noble gifts had been brought clearly to view. His splendid personal appearance, his athletic form, his military bearing, his power to command, his abundant knowledge and thorough training, all went to make him a well-nigh ideal officer. We may feel certain that he was not surpassed, perhaps he was not equalled, by any military officer in the Commonwealth at that time. So when we know the man, it does not then seem so strange that the head of a girls school was made the head of the military affairs of the State.

With the moderate salary of \$1,500, and no allowances, he set himself “earnestly at work, and soon had matters in hand.” “He made personal visits to the various regiments ;

. . . attended all the parades of the several brigades and regiments, arranged for drills and instruction of commissioned and non-commissioned officers, with a sufficient number of privates to make battalions of 150 to 200 men, and took personal charge of them. . . . Thus interest was excited in the infantry, and the service was soon improved."

In May, 1846, the Mexican war being in progress, the national government called for troops, and by direction of Governor Briggs General OLIVER took charge of raising and officering the regiment which Massachusetts sent out to that service under the command of Colonel Caleb Cushing. This regiment entered the city of Mexico with the army of General Scott.

In the year 1838 Colonel OLIVER had been elected first lieutenant of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Boston; and now, eight years later (1846), as General OLIVER he was elected captain, the highest social, military position in the State.

In the following year (1847) he was appointed by President Polk a member of the Board of Visitors of the Military Academy at West Point, and was made its secretary. But in the midst of gathering honors and efficient labors he was called to new duties in a wholly diverse sphere of action.

#### SUPERINTENDENT OF THE ATLANTIC COTTON MILLS.

If the appointment of a teacher of a girls school to be adjutant-general of a great State, if the preferring one then in civil life before all the older militia officers of that State and setting him over them, and if the complete success of this officer both in his personal relations to the men and in his whole administration of the affairs committed to his charge, do all together seem like a leaf torn out of a

romance, rather than a chapter of sober prose in this plain, prosaic century; hardly less strange is the next movement in the life of this extraordinary man, by which he, who had never run a spindle or loom, or handled a pound of cotton in any practical way, and who knew nothing more of a cotton mill than might be learned by walking casually through one, was called to be superintendent of a cotton mill not yet in existence. Having been appointed to this position by the directors and treasurer of the "Atlantic Cotton Mills," a newly organized manufacturing corporation at Lawrence, he resigned his position as adjutant-general, January 15, 1848, and repaired at once to that city. There he found one mill erected, but only the walls and flooring, no part of its "fitting up," that is, of its shafting, elevators, closets, etc., being in position, nor any of its machinery set up.

He at once went to Lowell, and devoted three months with Mr. Homer Bartlett, agent of the Massachusetts mill there, to acquiring a knowledge of the general management then in vogue of large cotton mills, to selecting overseers, second hands, etc.; and to watching the several stages in the process of manufacturing the goods from the bale to the cloth.

On the fifth of July the machinery began to be delivered at his own mill, and with his newly selected overseers, and without any outside assistance, he did all the work of fitting, setting up, and starting the machinery; getting it all running and beginning to turn out cloth in October. Their very first goods were of the finest grade, and were made from cotton known as "good middling," bought at seven cents a pound; and the General remarked with honorable pride, "a more beautiful article had not been placed upon the market. They have always kept a lead in the trade."

In nine months this man had learned a complicated and difficult manufacturing business, of which he before knew nothing, had selected with Mr. Bartlett's assistance his staff of subordi-

nate officials, every one of whom were unknown to him when he began, had taken an empty shell of a building, and he and they together had set up all the machinery in it, and in less than four months from the time they began to set it up had it in complete successful operation, turning out the best of goods. Such a work was the manifestation of extraordinary, perhaps of wholly unique powers.

In July of this year (1848), his family moved to Lawrence. The next year a second mill was built under his charge; and equipped and run with the same success as attended the other; and in 1850 yet a third mill was built. Otherwise his life as superintendent was in the nature of the case monotonous, and few incidents can be recalled. A general survey of the field with the statement of the chief reasons for his success, so far as we have been able to gather them, will set the man and his work in Lawrence sufficiently before us.

The first of his powers were rare keenness, quickness, penetration and scope of mind, by which he seized at once and held in masterful grasp whatever he set his mind upon. And these qualities were equally shown in the realm of things and the realm of persons. He saw into the system of a cotton mill, comprehended it as a whole, and mastered it in detail in five months. He could brigade a mill or a State with equal readiness and success. And he had such power to grow that he introduced improvements or supervised others in doing so with a readiness equal to that of experts trained in the matter from their youth. But his power to read persons was quite equal to his power to penetrate things. He knew a man when he saw him. His great gray eye was like the eye of fate. His was indeed an eagle glance. So marvellous was this power that only they who experienced it could really have the full sense of what he was in this regard.

The next of his powers was his personal magnetism, his power over men whereby he so touched and quickened them in

the very fountains of their life, that they instinctively desired to do what he would have done; and thus he secured from them, whether he was present or absent, their best service.

A third power, closely allied to this, was his pure sincerity, a source of perennial good will which flowed a clear, living stream from the depths of his own life in sweet purposes and wise actions for the welfare of all in his charge. By the working together of the last two powers in him he drew to himself the excellent men, the fine, well-skilled, and growing young men; and when they came it was to stay, and so well pleased were they that they drew others after them also. Thus it was that he gathered round him a class of overseers much superior to what is often found in mills.

And what were all these powers, as in happy radiance they were shed forth in Lawrence in constant glory of well-doing, but that same "potency of nature" which bound with silken cord his scholars to him when he was a school teacher, even from his early youth? In a slight incident which he relates, this kingly gentleness wherein his influence over others so largely lay is well displayed, and we present it here.

"A girl had appropriated to her own use a piece of cloth from her loom, pinning it about her waist under her clothing, and it had become loosened and dropped upon the ground, as she with the rest of the help was leaving the mill-yard at evening. It was picked up by an overseer, and brought with the girl to me, standing at the time [as he often did] on the mill-steps seeing the crowd go out. The poor girl trembling and mortified, stood amidst shouts of laughter, doubtless anticipating some severity at my hands. Knowing that not she alone of all the weavers had done this kind of wrong, I waited awhile till silence ensued, and then holding up the piece of cloth, said, 'Let her among you who never did the like say how this girl shall be punished.' Nobody spoke, but they all quietly walked away; and then, tossing the cloth to the offender, I said, 'Go, and sin no more.' I have always thanked Him who first dealt with an

offender thus, that I remembered his example. I suppose the poor girl, like the most of her comrades, was sorely pinched by poverty, and could not withstand the temptation. 'Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;' yet if we are not forgiven a good deal more than we forgive, we shall have a hard time of it."

Another illustration of his natural impulse toward his fellow-men was shown in connection with a fatal accident which happened at the mills one winter.

Sometimes in winter the ice would form or drift against the rack (which was set at the upper end of the flume to keep off flood-wood and the like from the wheel) to such an amount and solidity that it was necessary for men to get on the mass, break it up, and get the fragments away, so that the water would have free course to run through. On one occasion, in the winter of 1855, when three men were thus working, the pressure was so great that the rack gave way and was carried down instantly on to the great waterwheel, and one of the three men was swept away with it, while one of the others sprang out, and one fell in just at the side. When the rack gave way the General, hearing the crash, sprang to the spot and, leaping down upon the timber that had given way in the middle but yet held in place at the end, seized the man who had fallen in as he rose, but lost his hold being pulled away by a watchman who thought he was also falling in, and the man again sank. Assuring the watchman that he was safe, and stooping still farther down, as the man rose to the surface a second time, he grasped him with a firmer hold, and dragged him out.

The largeness and manifoldness of General OLIVER had their widest field and fullest display in Lawrence. And the fruits of his varied activities were many and lasting. One instance was his work in improving Lawrence Common, a lot of eighteen acres, which in 1849 was an uninteresting field with few

trees upon it. The Essex Company gave this lot to the city upon conditions that \$300 a year be expended upon it, and that the superintendents of three manufacturing companies, which were named, together with the mayor of the city constitute a committee to take charge of it and expend the money. The Atlantic mills was one of the companies named; and Superintendent OLIVER was made chairman of the committee, and the whole work was placed in his charge. By 1853 five hundred trees had been planted "in avenues, and cared for until rooted and established," and the rude, unsightly field in due time became "a very fine public square." "His interest in the park never flagged, and whenever he met a Lawrence man his inquiry was for his trees on the common."

Another of his public spirited good works was the establishment of a Free Library in his mill. To accomplish this, he "called together the overseers in 1851, and told them that if they would organize themselves into a library association, with suitable officers, he would commence the library with a donation of a hundred volumes, and a loan of \$50 for new purchases. This was done; and by consent of the treasurer, Mr. William Gray, a room was fitted up in the counting-room building, and the library commenced. Mr. Gray added valuable donations." Sometime since the number of volumes had increased to 3,500. He also established free hot and cold baths in a building in the rear of the mill.

Naturally, from his former avocation, feeling a deep interest in the educational affairs of the new town, and having been elected a member of the school committee, he proposed that as soon as a high school should be established, he would convey to the city for use in such school all the school apparatus that he had collected for his own school at Salem. This was done; and in recognition of the gift the building in which the high school was first established (and which is the largest school building in Lawrence) was called the Oliver School

House. He also presented to the high school for its principal room a set of busts and statuettes, and of engravings for its walls; and many books of reference, Latin, Greek, and mathematical, for the use of teachers and pupils.

In 1853 he was sent as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention, and was made chairman of the committee on military affairs.

In the same year occurred the notable case of his "famous effort to deposit his vote" at a turbulent town meeting, in which his courage, vigor, strength, and intense love of freedom and the exercise of one's legal rights, were so effectively manifested. The town meeting was holden to vote on the acceptance of the city charter, and the moderator had made a decision by which the Democrats deemed themselves aggrieved, and they determined to block the way to the ballot-box, and prevent voting. So

" . . . in an instant the avenues to the platform were blocked by a mass of angry, excited men, and the prospect of a row was unusually promising. The ballot-boxes could not be reached, and everything but arms and tongues were at a stand-still. At this instant General HENRY K. OLIVER entered the hall, and stood for a moment near the door to enquire into the occasion of the singular spectacle. On being informed of the situation of affairs his eyes flashed, and exclaiming, 'I should like to see the man who dares resist my casting a vote in a legal meeting,' he strode down the open space, thrusting aside one or two opposers, and quickly elbowed his way through the outer circle of the crowd, until he came to the solid mass blocking his way; when, placing his hands upon the shoulders of the two nearest men, he sprang up upon the mass, and was rapidly making his way, vote in hand, over heads and shoulders to the ballot-box, when he was seized by the skirts of his coat; but leaving one of them roughly torn away in the hands of his opposers, he reached the box, and placed therein his ballot. This success, no less than the ludicrousness of the movement, was too much for the

solidity of the Democratic column. Good nature was restored, and the voting went on."

Wherein his great power lay is well disclosed in the following remark made by a Lawrence paper in its obituary of him :

"In Lawrence the stalwart figure of the General, physically one of the finest specimens of manhood ever resident among us, will be long remembered. His trained voice, and ability as a public speaker and leader, whenever political, musical, or public matters were discussed, made him a prominent figure in every assembly."

After a prosperous run of the mills in 1855, the treasurer, as an expression of his satisfaction at the result, placed in General OLIVER's hands the means to defray the expense of a course of six lectures. Of these Hon. Josiah Quincy gave one, and General OLIVER four on astronomy, illustrated with large diagrams and a magic lantern. To these were added six concerts given by a chorus of a hundred singers selected from among the operatives of the mill, and trained by competent instructors under General OLIVER's supervision. Both lectures and concerts were given in a hall over the counting-room of the Pacific mills, and were all free to the mill people. So successful were the concerts that one of them was repeated by special request in the city hall to an operative audience, admitted free, of more than 1,500 persons.

In 1857 the ladies of Lawrence presented General OLIVER with a gold watch "as a slight token of their sincere regard and esteem, and as a pledge of their confidence in him, as a gentleman of generous and noble impulses and of the highest moral principles and sentiments."

Nine years had well-nigh passed away since the work of setting up the machinery had begun; and on May 25 of this year

(1857) he received a letter from the treasurer couched in flattering terms, announcing the successful run of the past year, the profit made, and asking him to add \$500 a year to his salary, making it \$3,500. In October following he "was amazed and thunderstruck at receiving" quite another kind of letter, which resulted in his being discharged from the service of the company; and to his dying day, although he at various times endeavored so to do, he could never get a single word as a clue to show the reason for the treatment inflicted on him.

Before the severing of his connection with the company, General OLIVER secured an examination of the mill property and accounts by experts, who reported the mill in complete order, and the accounts correct.

Concerning the cause of the event above stated enough is now known to show that his great and generous heart, by which he sympathized so keenly with the operatives that he shrank from cutting down wages as one would shrink from fire, was in large measure the cause. Thus came the first great shadow over his life.

From his peculiar and intimate relations with the overseers, it was quite appropriate that he should address them, as he did, a farewell letter. To this they sent him a letter in response, the chief portions of which are here given.

"In reviewing the ten years of your connection with us, they really seem like a pleasant dream, so unruffled their general aspect, and rapid their flight. True there has been an occasional cloud, . . . . but all have been satisfactorily resolved. . . . On the whole, the remark in your letter that 'unity of opinion and coöperative good will have marked our whole course,' is truly just, and one to which we heartily respond.

"You will doubtless pardon us for taking the liberty of pointing out somewhat in detail the leading characteristics which have distinguished your administration from some others with which we have been familiar during our history in manufacturing. While their sole

policy has been to secure the greatest possible amount of service for the least possible amount of money, your administration has been characterized, not only by a fair and just regard for the company's interests, by requiring close attention and application on the part of all employed; but, farther than this, you have uniformly manifested a zealous regard for every instrumentality which could be made to contribute to their mental, moral, and religious welfare.

"Among the various enterprises to this end allow us to mention that at an early day in our history your generous donation of one hundred volumes, which formed the nucleus of our now extensive library, claims a prominent place, and commands our highest commendation and gratitude. . . .

"It also affords us great pleasure to advert to the fact that, while our mental wants have been thus supplied, our love for the beautiful in nature has not been overlooked: for our yard, instead of being left to present a desolate, prison-like appearance, has (in accordance with your taste and skill) been made to blossom as the rose, presenting through the flowering seasons, in rich abundance, those representations of all that is beautiful in nature. Who among us has not been admonished by the language of those beautiful flowers, inciting to lives of purity, innocence and virtue.

"Another idea originating with you was the erection of bathing rooms for general use among the operatives, which have largely contributed both to their general health, and to their pleasure.

"And still another, never-to-be-forgotten;—we refer to those moral and instructive entertainments in the form of lectures and concerts, in which you were pleased to mingle with us as one of us, without regard to distinction or caste. This is truly an anomaly in manufacturing, and found only (to our knowledge) in your administration.

"We also feel greatly indebted to you for the interest manifested in regard to the proper keeping of the Sabbath, and attendance upon public worship; as also for your agency in securing free seats in the various churches, that none, however poor, need be excluded for want of sittings. In connection with this topic we would name another fact (peculiar to yourself), that, while you have been frank

and free in expressing your own religious and political views, you have accorded to others the same rights and privileges unmolested.

“But lastly, . . . it is well known throughout this community that all the public spirited enterprises of this city,—and especially the establishment of the Oliver grammar and high school, have, from the first, received your hearty coöperation and beneficent donations. In our opinion it is but just to say, our public schools owe their present flourishing condition and standing, mainly to your untiring interest and efforts in their behalf. . . .

• “In conclusion, permit us to express our sincere desires that long life, with health, happiness and prosperity may attend you here, and a blessed immortality await you hereafter.

(Signed)

J. M. RICHARDS,  
ELISHA WINCH,  
NEWMAN S. FOSTER,

*Committee.*

Plainly General OLIVER was before his time. In him we see a luminous ideal and prophecy of what a superintendent is to be in the coming age, when the spirit of the Crucified shall rule in a cotton mill, as fully as in the life of a saint.

The people of Lawrence appreciated the man who had done so much for their municipality, even if the corporation whose working force he had created failed to do so, and in November they elected him mayor, so that he filled that office during the year 1859. In the election of this year he was sent as representative to the General Court for 1860. During this period he served occasionally also as agent of the State Board of Education, visiting the public schools in various parts of the State, and attending institutes and conventions.

## TREASURER OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

The high esteem in which General OLIVER was held throughout the State was shown in a very marked way in the autumn of 1860 by his nomination for the office of Treasurer of the Commonwealth on the same ticket with John A. Andrew. He was four times re-elected, and thus became the war treasurer, as Andrew became the war governor. And it may not be too much to say that he did his full share in his place, as Governor Andrew did in his, to maintain Massachusetts in that leadership of all the loyal States, which she took from the start.

We can hardly imagine what his work really was, but some facts may help us in a measure. When he took the office there were but two clerks in it. When he left it there were thirty-two, including all departments, an increase made necessary by the variety and vastness of the financial operations which the war caused. During his five years of office he handled \$77,780,843.51, — a sum greater by \$18,125,204.34 than all the receipts of the State for the sixty years of the century before. In the last year alone (1865), his financial operations amounted to \$24,876,163.77, and he had in charge sinking and other funds to the amount of \$8,701,509.64. Moreover, wholly beyond the regular duties of his office, he was made virtual paymaster of all the troops which Massachusetts raised, for the various periods before they were mustered into the United States service; and went about from post to post as the occasion required, carrying the funds with him and paying the troops. Besides all the rest he was made the caretaker of bounty money to the amount of \$635,297.90, which it was no part of his duty to receive or have any charge of, but which he took at the request of Governor Andrew because there seemed to be no other person to take it. When the interest had accumulated on this sum to the amount of \$9,800, and the

attorney-general had given his written opinion that this money belonged to the party who had taken care of the principal, General OLIVER, having too fine a sense of honor to take it without a definite, legal title, referred the matter to the legislature. This body voted a petty \$500 to the treasurer for his services, and turned the balance into the recruitment fund.

The mere enumeration of his services at the close of his five years' term (the constitutional limit) "filled *six pages* of an octavo legislative document (House Doc't No. 226, 1865)." He had received and paid out, that is, twice handled, a sum amounting in round numbers to 155 millions of dollars once handled, had been under bonds of \$100,000 renewed every year; and for all this immense care and labor he had received an average annual salary of \$2,300. And when, at the close of his term of service the legislature learned from him the facts, it promptly raised the salary to \$5,000 for his successor; *but it did nothing for him.*

The story of his action in saving the credit of the State in June, 1864, has been often told, and does not need to be repeated here. But there is one element in the story, never to our knowledge brought out, which deserves to be especially mentioned. This man, who had too fine a sense of honor to take the interest money without an explicit legal title, had equally too fine a sense of responsibility to take the risk of promising more interest on the State loan than the law provided, without making adequate provision to meet the same, if the legislature did not approve his act. And so he and his wife, of their own accord, dedicated their little patrimony to this end, if the need should be, well knowing that they ran the risk of being stripped of their last dollar. And after this joint act of sacrifice by the two in their heart, the husband went cheerily on to the street, and arranged for the amount needed. Such was the man, who served his native State with abundant

capacity and perfect rectitude in her dire period of stress and storm.

Massachusetts, with honest pride in righteous doing, gained for herself the high honor of paying in gold during and after the war every debt incurred in gold before the war, and so keeping her faith with her creditors unbroken; and her war treasurer did his full share towards this achievement. By reason of his character and capacity in part it could be said at the close of the war, "yet the fiscal affairs of the Commonwealth, notwithstanding the strain to which they have been subjected, are in the highest degree satisfactory; and the financial credit of Massachusetts stands unsurpassed at home and abroad." No one, we think, can survey the whole field of this service, and become familiar with the facts, without coming to the conclusion that the character which the war treasurer displayed was a distinct honor to the Commonwealth, and that for the labors he performed, the burdens he bore, and the services he rendered there is still due him a distinct debt.

In January, 1866, the man who had rendered these gigantic services to his native State went out of his office by constitutional limitation, without a place and without an income. Upon his election as treasurer he had moved back to Salem, and was now dwelling in the ancestral mansion which his wife had inherited from her father, and around which the most sacred associations of his early manhood were gathered. After but a few days, namely, on the 26th of this month, his wife died, but he continued to keep house, his daughters acting as housekeepers.

#### BUREAU OF STATISTICS OF LABOR.

In September, 1867, Governor Bullock gave General OLIVER an appointment "to look into the condition of the factory children in the various establishments of the State;" and he con-

tinued in this work nearly two years, "finding the several laws relating to their employment when under ten years of age, when between ten and fifteen years of age, and to their schooling, violated every where." He "prepared two reports on the subject which excited not a little attention and comment."

On the 23d of June, 1869, Governor Claflin approved the bill for the establishment of this Bureau, and July 31 following appointed General OLIVER its chief. Of his fitness for the place, both as to spirit and capacity, the foregoing narrative gives abundant evidence. Of his work here done we need not speak at length. The four volumes of his reports are his monument; and as an evidence of the estimation in which they are held we may mention the fact that the Bureau frequently receives requests for them from various parts of the world. In judging of them it should be borne in mind that the field was wholly new, that of precedents there were absolutely none, that he was the pioneer of all such work in the world; and a fair judgment will decide that he worked with courage, fidelity, thoroughness, and much clear-sight. To have staked out the ground would have been a large work, but he did more. Some of the worst fallows in the field he vigorously set about breaking up.

Experiments had to be tried, and he tried them. Some of his work struck at the roots of great evils, or erroneous opinions in society, and so awakened deep hostilities. This was inevitable. His reports weighed strongly in behalf of the wage workers. They could not be truthful without doing so; and the larger and more complete they were in setting forth the actual facts, the more they must weigh on that side. At length with strong and heavy hand, but with accurate touch, he laid bare the tenement-house system of Boston; and also made it plain that the savings banks of the Commonwealth were largely the storehouses in which the well-to-do people preserved their plenty out of the reach of taxation. Inevitably a storm was

raised against him, and when his second term expired he was not reappointed.

Concerning his work there is no need that we speak further. But it is well-fitting that he himself should give his own view of it; and to this end we present considerable extracts from his private memoranda, as follows :

“To the duties of this office I gave my undivided attention, having to grope my way, unguided by precedent, example, or experience, — everything connected with our investigations being new, and nearly all of those investigations being rendered difficult and embarrassing by the very strong and powerful influence of the employing class of the State, who with no sympathy in the subject-matter of our inquiries, withheld, as a general rule, all such information as our inquiries were directed to obtain. The laboring class as a whole, however, gave such support as their small means and unemployed time would permit. The inquiries were in their behalf, elicited their support, and gained their confidence. . . .

. . . . I prepared, with the assistance of Mr. McNeill, four annual reports, upon the earnings, cost of living, and savings or indebtedness of the laboring classes of the State: their homes, education, habits of living, morals, manners, hours of labor, amusements, societies of various sorts; upon factory life, factory operatives, factory children, — the schooling of the latter, half-time schools, etc., etc.: in fact upon everything relating to the great question of labor and the laboring classes, skilled and unskilled, and to every grade and variety of them.”

Speaking of the savings banks, he says :

“These banks were originally intended to be the managing depositaries of the poorer and working classes; but we found by a very full investigation that while the banks were the resort of the poorer class in great excess [of numbers], (13 or 14 of them to 1 of the better-to-do class), they were likewise the resort to a large extent of the latter class: and that (taking 1870 as an illustrative year) one-

fourteenth of the whole number of deposits contributed three-sevenths of the whole amount deposited; that of 47 millions deposited about 21 millions were deposited in sums of \$300 and upwards, averaging \$573 for each deposit, the remaining 26 millions being deposited in sums under \$300, and averaging about \$55 for each deposit. Now as the average earning for skilled labor that year was only about \$700, out of which an average family was supported, it was plain that none of the first class of depositors were skilled laborers, but were of the wealthier folk above them; and this showed that nearly half at least of the money in those banks was that of the better-to-do people."

"Our revelations occasioned a great stir, and great excitement."

"It soon became public opinion and yet remains so that these banks are largely used by the better-to-do classes, and even by capitalists; and that it cannot be argued with truth that the increase of their deposits is an indication of the prosperity of the working classes."

Concerning factory children, he says :

"We proved that very little regard was paid to the laws of the State in relation to the employment of children in factories, and to those requiring that these children should receive a certain amount of schooling each year; and that children under ten years of age, notwithstanding legal prohibitions, were employed all over the State, and that in not a few instances factory children received from year to year no instruction whatever; so that of the children of the State between 5 and 15 years of age, at least 10 per cent could not be accounted for as attending any school, public or private. Our deductions were founded on the reports of the Secretary of the State Board of Education."

"I left the Bureau in May, 1873, retiring with an entire consciousness that I had omitted no effort in endeavoring to do my whole duty; and that, regardless of personal considerations, I had faithfully set forth the real status of the working people, — the real producers of the State."

One of his peculiar qualifications for the place he filled in this Bureau was that he was a man of sympathetic heart, who ever saw the human in the poorest and lowliest of men. The following extract from an address illustrates this element of his character.

On the 23d of June, 1874, the working people of Lawrence celebrated the passage of the ten hour law. Gen. OLIVER was present, and was reported by the *Journal* of that city to have "closed an able speech with these noble words :

"Before I close I wish to speak on a subject that is very dear to my heart. I speak it tenderly—it is that of the children. I have a little grandchild at home whom I love dearly, and whom I have spoiled—what grandfathers usually do. Among the many faces around me I see a number from over the water. Some of you will remember that, before the ten hour bill was passed, children were gathered up by employers from all over the country—from poor-houses and the streets of the cities—and put to work in the factories. Those children never returned to where they were taken from. They never were heard of after. The first Sir Robert Peel said, 'Take care of the children.' Now the children are taken care of. And I want to see before I die the short-time schools of England established in this country, and no child under the age of fifteen years to be allowed to work over five hours a day. And I want you, the gainers by this measure, to see that the law relating to the employment of children is strictly enforced. And now as I close and bid you good night, I will say what I said at a previous banquet in this city. A celebrated Queen of England once said that if her heart was opened after her death, on it would be found the word, 'Calais.' Lord Ashley, now Earl of Shaftesbury, said that upon his heart would be found the words, 'Lancashire operatives.' If my heart could be seen under similar conditions, upon it would be found the words, 'Factory children.'"

As an example of the marked intellectual qualifications of General OLIVER to be chief of this Bureau, and of the high

appreciation which he awakened in those who were especially fitted to judge, we quote the following by Mr. George Holyoake, from his book entitled "Among the Americans."

"Gen. H. K. OLIVER was a name I had known in England in connection with questions of international industry. The social wisdom of his conversation, now I had the pleasure to be his guest, impressed me very distinctly. He explained to me that when in charge of this Bureau, he counselled workmen to provide themselves with a *competence* for their declining years ; — defining ' competence ' as that sum which, if invested in days of health and work (from earnings), would yield an income at a given age, equal to their average annual income, and sufficient to maintain them in the station in which they had moved. This is what I mean by wise talk, conversation that moves steadily to new issues, and in which material terms are rendered definite. ' Competence ' is a term on many tongues, but Gen. OLIVER was the first person whom I heard define it as he used it."

These words, coming from one of England's foremost thinkers and writers on industrial questions, are certainly high praise. In them is reflected a single ray from this great and luminous soul.

He ceased his labors in this Bureau in May, 1873, not being reappointed. All his great, unexampled, highly honorable services to the State seemed to him to have been forgotten ; and this man of keen spirit and high sense of honor was cut to the quick with the apparent injustice done him. He shared with all prophets and pioneers of human progress in all the ages past the sacrificial pain without which, it would seem, the advancement of mankind cannot be achieved.

And now, as we close the record of this passage in his life, we venture the judgment that when he was made chief of this Bureau no other citizen of the Commonwealth was so well prepared, whether by natural endowments or by experience

and training, for the work that there was to do ; and that both what he did and what he endured entitle him to the lasting gratitude of all toilers, whom he so earnestly and with singleness of mind served.

#### A JUDGE AT THE CENTENNIAL.

For about three years he "was almost entirely unemployed." In 1875 a school building in Salem was named after him, at the dedication of which he made the address. Also his birthday was celebrated by his friends in Salem that year in a manner "long to be remembered." Early in April, 1876, he was appointed one of the judges at the International Centennial Exhibition, held in Philadelphia, Pa., and went there on the tenth of that month. He was assigned to Group XXV, which was devoted to "Instruments of Precision." This "included astronomical instruments of all sorts, trigonometrical and surveying instruments ; magnetic, electric, telegraphic, and telephonic instruments ; and microscopes. There were also added musical instruments of every variety from organs down ;" and these last being formed into a sub-group, he was made chairman, and as such prepared the printed reports. Having finished his duties and returned home, he was recalled in October to be one of the "Judges on Appeals."

#### MAYOR OF SALEM.

While yet in Philadelphia he received in November a letter from Salem desiring him to accept a nomination for the mayoralty of that city. He consented, and was elected and re-elected, serving in all four years. His administration was characterized by economy, reduction of expenses, great reduc-

tion of the debt of the city, and a thorough visitation of the schools and discussion of their interests. When the municipal year of 1881 was approaching, the General, having rounded his full eighty years of life, declined a renomination.

#### CLOSING YEARS.

In December, 1880, he presided at the annual dinner of the alumni of the Boston Latin School; in May, 1881, at the annual dinner of the Unitarian Association given in Music Hall; October 21, at a banquet held at the Revere House in honor of the completion by Franz Liszt of his seventieth year; and in November, at the annual dinner of the Association of the Alumni of the Boston grammar schools prior to 1831.

In April, 1881, the family removed for a year to Boston by the desire of his children, that he might have a better opportunity for hearing concerts, lectures, etc. In July of that year the American Institute of Instruction, of which as "Master OLIVER" he was one of the founders in 1830, met at St. Albans, Vt. With a possible exception he was the sole survivor of the original members. By request of the directors he prepared and delivered there a eulogy on George B. Emerson, who had died in the March before. During the winter following he lectured twice before the Young Men's Christian Union, and delivered other addresses in Boston, Lawrence, and Haverhill.

In April, 1882, he went to pass the summer at North Andover with a daughter, then recently married. The season being one of unusual heat, a weakness of the heart was developed, which ordinary remedies did not control; and in the ensuing winter a fatal result was anticipated. More decided treatment, however, restored a considerable measure of health as the spring drew on. In May following he returned to the old house in

Salem, sacred to him by so many hallowed associations and tender recollections, and continued to reside there till his death. "He gave up attendance upon any public meetings, and went to the polls but once; but spent most of his time in reading, and writing music, and articles for the press."

At the annual meeting of the trustees of Dartmouth College, held in June, 1883, he was made Doctor of Music. A request having been made by President Bartlett of that institution the following year for a portrait, one was painted in the late autumn, and sent there in season for the Commencement of 1885. Also, at the request of the present chief of this Bureau, a portrait in oil was provided and placed in the rooms of the Bureau. The letter of the chief acknowledging the portrait gave to the General the highest satisfaction.

At length, in midsummer of last year, the time of the end came. On Sabbath evening, July 26, the final stroke fell, being a semi-paralysis of a portion of the brain not affecting the motor system. He lingered, gradually failing, until Wednesday evening, August 12, when, as the gloaming was darkening over the earth, he peacefully fell asleep. On Monday following he was buried from the North Church, where he had worshipped so long, with the full honors of a reverent people. He has passed from the sight of men; but his name shall live and his memory be cherished, we believe, while God shall be worshipped in song, and courage, purity, public beneficence, and high manliness shall be loved and honored among men.

#### HIS PERSONAL APPEARANCE.

In person General OLIVER was a trifle less than six feet high, of square shoulders and massive frame. His head was  $23\frac{3}{4}$  inches in circumference, and his brow was Websterian,—a beetling crag, underneath which his large, full-set, and lumin-

ous gray eyes looked out with keen and kindly glance. His nose was Roman, his jaw square and strong; and the flesh hung on his face in folds like a vail, tremulous to every emotion of the sensitive soul that dwelt behind it. There was something of the mastiff in him, but the heart that beat in that grim and powerful frame was all alive with gentle humanness, and love of every virtue, and quick delight in every high, chivalric deed.

Various expressions of judgment concerning him, which appeared in the press at the time of his decease, are quite worth preserving, as showing the general estimate in which he was held in the communities where he had resided.

“In the death of General OLIVER, Salem loses her foremost citizen. Judge Endicott and Dr. Loring are probably more widely known, but the general’s long and varied career entitles him to the rank we have given him.”

“Gifted with a commanding presence, and with large and varied mental aptitudes, with an ear attuned to music and a voice of unlimited strength and compass [“a stentorian voice” it was called in Lawrence], he was a born leader. His powers as teacher, writer, student and executive officer were such as are rarely combined in the same person. But the strongest note in his character—the dominant chord—was the musical one, as will be surely testified by those who recall him (as the present writer does) in charge of this part of the service in the North Church, Salem, which he raised to choice excellence, as he did also that of the Unitarian Church in Lawrence.”

“Large-hearted, full of generous instincts and purposes, the poor of Lawrence had, during the early years of that city, no warmer and more constant friend than General OLIVER.

“In educational matters he was equally efficient. When superintendent of public schools, or as a private citizen, he could and did step in and fill the place of the high school principal, when that was temporarily vacant.”

“He was an industrious and unsparing student, his tastes leading him to the languages, and the physical and mathematical sciences. He was familiar with the Greek, Latin (which he wrote and spoke with great ease), French, Spanish and Italian languages; and, when a teacher, took great delight in pupils whose tastes led them in the same direction. He aimed especially at thoroughness and exactness in the study of the classics, and the scholars whom he fitted for college will bear testimony to his persevering and practical fidelity.”

“In whatever he was engaged General OLIVER exhibited large intellectual resources and unusual fertility of mind. He was extremely fruitful in thought, and had retained vast stores of knowledge on various subjects, acquired in his student days. There are very few who commenced their mental labors so early, who worked so assiduously, and who continued them to so great an age.”

“As a teacher he was remarkable for the skill with which he combined perfect familiarity with his pupils on the play-ground, or any where out of doors, and thorough control of them in the school-room.”

His “intellectual resources” and “fertility of mind” had their fullest manifestation during that period of his life when he was a teacher, especially in the later portions of it when, “besides the daily labors of his school, he delivered lectures and addresses very frequently, and was active in most of the literary enterprises of the time.” He was quite adequate to all this, because he was “a ready speaker, a clear and forcible writer, familiar with many branches of science and literature.”

“He held office many years, and held many offices, yet he died poor as the world counts wealth. He never profited by any position which he held. Nor did he surrender his opinions for any purpose. What he thought he spoke, what he believed he did.”

It may be added that what he thought was truth, and what he spoke was wisdom; that what he believed was good, and what he did was righteousness, to a degree rarely attained by

men. Through his crystalline soul the light from the pure, interior realm of life was transmitted with almost unrefracted ray.

His spirit and temper is shown, and the living presence in him of that same overmastering love of freedom and sympathy for all the oppressed of every nationality, which lived and burned in our revolutionary fathers, so near to whom he was born, by the fact that "in the eighty-first year of his age he addressed a land league indignation meeting in Salem, in clear and eloquent phrase expressing his earnest sympathy with their cause, and urging that the weapons of Ireland's warfare be reason, right, and the truth unyieldingly insisted upon."

There is one trait of General OLIVER's character which we would fain present, but which quite eludes our pen. It is his wit, his humor, his *bonhomie*. Says one, "His love of fun was irresistible, and he possessed a bright, keen humor." Another writes, "His wit and humor were keen, exuberant, and irrepressible, his industry untiring, his intellectual resources exhaustless." His humor was like the shimmer of sunlight over the landscape in a sultry summer day. His whole person quivered with it on occasion. When he laughed he laughed all over, frame and flesh all shaking with the merriment. But it cannot be set down and told with types. Sooner could one photograph the colors of a sunset than put forth in print the gleam and glow and billowy flow of humor and fun in his talk. And there was no frivolity in it. It was altogether the play-impulse of a large, active, and many-sided soul, disporting itself just a little in a natural, spontaneous way. Nor was there a trace in it of that dark, malicious bitterness which finds its perverse delight in thrusting to the quick a fellow human for some peculiar, inborn trait. He made fun for others, but never of others.

But wit, the intellectual side of humor, this can be told ; and one very bright instance we here relate. When the concerts were given by the chorus of operatives in Lawrence, there were no printed programs ; but General OLIVER announced the pieces from the stage. At one of the concerts, perhaps the last one, in the city hall, the General announced as the last piece of the evening, “ The Three Bell(e)s of Lawrence ; ” and, as everybody was looking with eager curiosity to see who might the three fair damsels be who should come on to the stage under such a title, the bells of the three factories began to ring for nine o’clock, the vast audience took the joke, and in the best of good humor the people dispersed to their homes.

Perhaps in nothing did his intellectual powers of learning, thought, and wit combined so much appear as in his macaronic poetry. He dropped into macaronic writing in a letter, or on a postal, just as easily as he uttered a humorous remark in conversation, and the gleam of fun was always lurking in it. One poem of this character, containing the names of many persons, is especially spoken of.

In his family life there was a beauty, strength, and tenderness well-nigh as rare as the man himself. He was genial, gentle, faithful, watchful ; and nothing lacked in all his life of what a man could do for home. A writer says : “ In his private and family life General OLIVER was most kind, gentle and lovable. To his friends he was endeared by most pleasing traits of character. His vivacity of manner, his wit and humor, his merry tales, and his treasures of knowledge made him extremely companionable.” And another says : “ His fund of information and his great versatility made him a delightful conversationalist on any topic.” Such was the man in home and social life.

He was a communicant of the Unitarian Church, passing to it with so many from the Evangelical Church in the twenties. At one time before this event he had contemplated being a

minister, as we have previously said, and made some preparations to that end. In his private school he gave "unsectarian religious teaching" on the Sabbath to such of his pupils as desired. But it was in his spirit and way of life as superintendent of a cotton mill that he most fully exemplified Christianity, and gave the especial evidence that he was a genuine follower of the Nazarene.

In all persons and all things *quality*, which is density, purity, fineness, and in living things *verve* combined, must have quite equal consideration with volume and variety, in order to a full and complete estimate, and a just judgment. This is eminently true of the subject of our memoir. And the quality of this man in the whole substance and spontaneity of his life had its perfect disclosure in his musical gifts. This teacher, military commander, manufacturer, treasurer of a State, and first chief of a labor bureau in the world, was a musician of a high order.

Whoever has studied with intent gaze the grain and bloom of a brilliant flower, and carefully noted the delicate tints which in gentle gradations from pink to white were disclosed in the petals, and has reflected on the nature of living things, cannot have failed to perceive that the vitality of the plant came to the acme of the intensity of its manifestation in that flower. Music was the exquisite bloom of this manifold soul.

Ere he was three years old he was learning to sing on his mother's knee, and he caught the singing from her, who was "a fine singer," it is said; and so we know that his aptitude came in his blood. At ten years of age he was a singer in the Park Street Church choir, having "a pure and powerful soprano voice, which continued into his seventeenth year, when it fell to a deep bass" of like quality. Forbidden by his father (who shared the prejudices of religious people in those days against all except sacred music) to learn to play any instrument, the powers within him compelled him to disobey; and he mended up an old, cracked, one-keyed flute, and began to

learn on it, hiding it whenever a visit of his father was expected. He was ever in some choir, in that of the Park Street Church, as has been said, in the Picrian Sodality and the chapel choir at Harvard, in the church choir at Dartmouth, and in a Salem choir at first, until he became an organist. He began to learn the piano and organ in 1821. As he grew in years he grew in musical development, and became "an expert performer on the organ, violoncello, flute, and piano forte." He was an organist for some thirty-six years or more, namely, for about two years, beginning in 1823, at St. Peter's Church, Salem; for two years after at Barton Square Church; for twenty years at the North Church; and for twelve years at the Unitarian Church in Lawrence. About 1824, also, he organized in Salem the Mozart Association for the study of the works of the great authors, he being its president, organist, and conductor.

But he also rose to the yet higher grade of composer. Having early made himself familiar with the laws of musical harmony he began, at thirty-one, the composition of tunes with "Federal Street," and wrote chants, motets, anthems, a Te Deum, and many hymn tunes. "In 1849 he edited, with Dr. S. P. Tuckerman, a collection of church music, called 'The National Lyre;' and in 1875 published a work, entitled 'Oliver's Collection of Sacred Music.'" He was, moreover, "one of the oldest members of the Boston Handel and Haydn Society, and of the Salem Oratorio Society, and an honorary member of the Portland Haydn Society."

"The proudest moment of his long musical career came to him on the 25th of June, 1872, when at the Great World's Peace Jubilee in Boston, in the presence of President Grant, Secretaries Fish, Robeson, and Boutwell of the Cabinet, and many dignitaries, he stepped from the ranks of the undistinguished chorus, and, taking his place among the three or

four great composers and conductors of the world, he led, baton in hand, a choir of 20,000 persons in his own hymn and choral, — in ‘Federal Street,’ with his own words, ‘Hail Gentle Peace,’” written for the occasion.

In April, 1876, he was appointed one of the judges at the Centennial in Philadelphia, Pa., and assigned to the work on musical instruments there, as we have heretofore described.

But a mere catalogue of work and achievement cannot fulfil our purpose. The soul of the man in its whiteness and nobility exhaled in his music, and that music must be sung in order that the whiteness and nobility may be seen. As a specimen we have selected, and here present, what we believe to be his finest composition, the tune “Merton.”

### MERTON.

REV. PHILIP DODDRIDGE.

H. K. OLIVER.

Ye golden lamps of heav'n, fare-well, With all your fee - ble light;

Farewell, thou ev - er - changing moon, Pale em - press of the night.

This tune, like his more familiar but less intellectual and individual “Federal Street,” was not properly speaking composed. It came into his mind as a sweet echo from a far away land, and the way of its coming was this. One Sabbath in 1843, in

the North Church, Salem, of which General OLIVER was musical director and organist from 1828 to 1849, and Rev. John Brazer was at the time pastor, Dr. Doddridge's beautiful hymn, beginning "Ye golden lamps of heav'n, farewell," was to be sung as the last piece in the afternoon. All through the day the director could recall no tune that seemed adapted to the words. The afternoon sermon had got well under way, but the director was not listening to it. Instead he "was conning the words of the hymn, more intent upon them than upon the words of the preacher," when suddenly a melody came floating into his mind. It being his custom always to have blank music paper at hand, he at once pencilled down the melody, and set the other three parts to it, thus completing the score for his own use. Then he made a copy of each several part on a single staff, and handed the slip to the one of his quartet choir who sang that part—all of whom could read music at sight, and "were singers of rare excellence both in voice and skill." So when the reading of the hymn was ended, the organ sounded, the choir arose and sang with earnest heart and well befitting tones; and thus was this tune, which the angels had brought, given forth that day unto men.

Merton is a unique tune. It is too high and fine and different to be imitated. In originality, in delicacy, in purity, spirituality, and aspiration, it has few equals and no superiors in the realm of American sacred song. It seems like a lofty Ionic column of pure, Pentelic marble, standing in the soft moonlight of a summer night, when the moon at her full rides high up towards the zenith.

But it is not for the tune itself, but to reveal the soul through which it came, that the above has been written. Only through a soul large and white, like one of the heavenly gates of pearl, could the angels have breathed such a tune. Who knows the tune, and loves it in his heart, may know in so far the grain

and grade of this stainléss, knightly soul, that soared with the eagle, sang with the lark, and walked in the ways of the living God with a perfect heart.

### HIS MASTERFULNESS.

If we were asked to decide wherein, most of all, the greatness of this man of manifold powers lay, we should answer that it was in his ability to *master* whatever he set himself upon.

He was master of himself, and his life was a career of singular purity, integrity, good-will, and well-doing. He was master of his pupils, and that by such excellent powers, so beneficently exerted, that to the last they loved to think and speak of him as "Master OLIVER;" and they evidently felt towards him something as President Garfield felt towards his president, Mark Hopkins of Williams College. He became master of many studies, some of which at first were distasteful to him, but in which he acquired by sheer force of mind and will a positive delight. He was master of military affairs in such eminent degree that he made the militia regiment which he commanded well-nigh equal in drill to troops of the regular army; and afterwards he raised the standard of efficiency of the militia of the whole State, when put in charge over it. He grasped at once, and became master in a few months, of the whole business of manufacturing cotton cloth, gathering and controlling many hundreds of operatives, and conducting the manufacturing operations of a great corporation with as much smoothness and precision as he did his girls school of fifty pupils,—a gigantic work wrought by a giant man. He became master of finance, and bore the unexampled burdens of his office as war treasurer of this Commonwealth so easily, that few realized how great the burdens were, or understood

what service he was rendering; and as a master he wrought his pioneer work in this office. Above all other titles well may he ever be known as "Master OLIVER."

### HIS CAST OF MIND.

Whoever surveys the life of General OLIVER cannot but feel that he did not gain that high place in the world's knowledge and esteem, which his powers deserved; and the reason may justly be asked. It lay in the structure of his mind, and the nature of his personality as springing therefrom.

His mind was fundamentally discursive rather than concentrative. His life ran out rich and strong on various lines of thought and action, but never did and could not bring all its force to bear on any one work. His powers worked apart, and with plenitude of results; but these were like rays dispersed from a convex reflector. The several beams were seen, each in its separate line; but in seeing them one did not feel the full measure of the soul from which they sprang. His selfhood did not centre in his will sufficiently to secure the working of all his gifts together in such a way as to constitute him, in the highest degree which those gifts should have enabled him to be, a personal force in society. He himself recognized this at length, as when, near the close of his life, surveying the beginning of his career, he spoke of the "entire self-distrust" which he felt at that time, and said "that this distrust had always impeded his labors."

### LAST WORDS.

We sum up the whole man in a single saying. General OLIVER had the eye of an eagle, the frame of a lion, and the heart of a woman; and the large and noble powers of such a

being were blended together into a fine harmonious unity in him. He was a kingly man in person, in endowments, and in action; and the manifoldness of his career was according to the greatness and diversity of his powers. He was a teacher of youth, and he came to be of the first order, attaining to the same rank, though not to the same fame, with Arnold of Rugby. While a school teacher he became a military officer of such excellence as to receive promotions extraordinary if not unexampled in this Commonwealth, during the period in which his service occurred. From being adjutant-general of the State he was called, without previous acquaintance with the business, to take charge of an empty building, select the staff, gather the help, put in, set up and start the machinery, and manage the manufacturing operations of a great cotton-mill corporation; and such was his power to grasp and master new affairs, his keenness in reading men, his judgment in selecting them, and the "potency of his nature" in moving them to act in willing agreement with himself, that from the first yard of cloth the product of the mills was in the highest grade, and for the whole period that he had charge they were a complete success. He was the war treasurer of this Commonwealth, as Andrew was the war governor; and without a flaw of action, but in the hour of exigency with ready daring he bore every burden as it came, handling vaster sums of money than any official in his place before or since, and for an average pay about half what is now provided. He was the founder of the work of this Bureau; and in the fulfilment of his duties endured with dauntless courage the brunt of a sore conflict, with clear-sighted devotion breaking the way for those who should come after. And finally he was a religious musician, a writer of tunes that cannot die — a "sweet singer of Israel," whose name will live in dear regard while men shall sing in English speech to the worship of God. The exquisite quality

of this high gift has made him to rank among the purest, choicest souls of his day. Teacher of youth, general of soldiers, manager of mills, treasurer of the State, first chief of this Bureau, musician and writer of sacred songs that live perennial in the Christian heart, what parallel to the man and his career in all these lines shall be found in our time?





